FFAC-2006-U-23

Concordia University
Faculty of Fine Arts Council
Minutes of the Meeting of May 23, 2006
Open Session

Present: L. Berezowsky, D. Berthiaume, Y. Bilodeau, A. Cappelluto, C. de Grandpre, A. Fargnoli, B. Foss, D. Jojich, R. Kenneally, R. Kerr, W. Krol, R. Lachapelle, C. Lajeunesse, J. Leclerc, Z. Levinson, C. MacKenzie, C. Milot, M. Murphy-Perron, K. Perry, G. Schwartz, M. Singer, S. Snow, T. Stathopoulos, C. Wild

Absent: R. Cross, A. Dutkewych, R. Ellias, A. Fairchild, L. Lerner, T. Little, M. Longford, M. Milhorat, T. Misu, D. Oxley, S. Paikowsky, G. Powell, R. Reid, M. Reinhart, T. Waugh

Guests: J-P. Duchesne, K. Adams, K. Herland, S. Diamond

The Dean welcomed Doctors Lajeunesse and Singer to Council. Dr Lajeunesse began by stating that the top priority for Concordia University is the hiring of new faculty – 25 new hires and 25 more to replace the 25 faculty members who have retired. In the last 7 years student enrollment has increased by 45%, but we've lost faculty members. In view of the fact that Concordia will be in budget deficit this year and next, it will be a considerable challenge to meet the budget and hire new faculty. Nevertheless, the priority will be on hiring new faculty. The second priority is research. Creating knowledge is the job of a university. Therefore, faculty must be supported with start-up financing and other grants.

A question and answer period ensued.

Associate Dean Cappelluto wondered how the new position of VP Research would impact the University. For example, how will that person interface with the Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies?

Dr Lajeunesse replied that it would have to be reviewed.

G. Schwartz asked how the President feels about part-time faculty, particularly since there are so many in Fine Arts?

Dr Lajeunesse responded that it is a matter of getting a balance between full-time and part-time faculty. Part-time faculty plays an important role as they help students see the real world.

G. Schwartz said your introductory comments imply that part-time faculty don't do research. They do, but it's a different kind of research. How can part-timers get grants is an ongoing discussion. In the Department of Music, part-time faculty has kept the Department on its feet.

Dr Lajeunesse stated that he does understand the difference between research and creative activity. Both are valuable to the university and to society. He needs to understand the relationship of part-time faculty vis-à-vis research. He will meet with Dean Wild to discuss it.

Z. Levinson stated that more technicians are needed in Fine Arts, not just new faculty. This is particularly important in regards to the new EV Building. There are more students and there is more complex equipment.

Dr Lajeunesse responded that he will look at the report Fine Arts is preparing vis-à-vis teachers, support staff, etc. and then communicate with the Faculty.

C. MacKenzie said that there has been no mention of the Library, which has become an inhospitable place for graduate students. She hopes that graduate students will be accommodated with better library resources and places to study. Will that be done?

Dr Lajeunesse replied that $1 million is going to the Library this year and more financial support next year. Dr Singer stated that there are issues surrounding the Library, such as safety, support staff, space. There has been discussion about converting several floors of the McConnell building into Library space. Concept drawings are presently being done to see how these renovations would appear. Admittedly, the Library is Concordia's weakest point.

Associate Dean Foss wondered how the increased number of graduate students would be financially supported.

Dr Lajeunesse replied that it would be done in 3 ways:
1) tuition remission
2) fund-raising campaigns
3) getting the provincial and federal governments to increase the financial support of graduate students

The above will be a major component of the responsibilities of the new VP Graduate Studies.

Dr Singer stated that there are too many undergraduate students in comparison to graduate students. There is a need to decrease undergraduates and increase graduates., which will free up workloads, etc.

K. Perry asked how the space problems in the 3 Fine Arts departments at Loyola would be handled?

Dr Lajeunesse said that there are a number of difficulties, that is, large classes for teachers, overworked technicians, space, etc. Dr Singer added that in the long run, the space issue would be resolved. The problems at Loyola are temporary. The space issue

for all of Fine Arts, not just on the downtown campus, should have been looked at earlier. The Grey Nuns building could be an answer, but when will it be ready? In the interim, perhaps the VA building could be used. In any case, the Music Department must be moved as soon as possible.

M. Murphy-Perron said that the students miss the VA building – it's their "home". The contract for the support staff is unresolved and that impacts on the quality of work of the staff helping students. When will the contract be signed?

Dr Lajeunesse said that it was being handled and that he could not comment further.

Dr Singer frankly admitted that despite a lack of adequate resources, Concordia decided to hire new faculty and didn't concern itself with the support staff. Deliberate choices were made and new faculty members are the priority for now.

Dean Wild stated that the University is trying to make the best choices in the face of the challenges involved.

The last meeting of the 2005-06 academic year was adjourned at 3 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

S. Olshaski
May 26, 2006